

## The Oregonian

### Campaign violation? Aide to Mayor Charlie Hales says he opposes Portland Public Water District on personal time

*By Brad Schmidt*

The aide to Portland Mayor Charlie Hales being investigated for an alleged election-law violation told the state that he is an active campaign volunteer against the Portland Public Water District who shared his views about the ballot measure at the request of his boss – but on personal time.

Josh Alpert, one of Hales' policy directors, discussed ballot measure 26-156 at an April 2 meeting sponsored by law firm Tonkon Torp.

Alpert's involvement in the meeting prompted an election-law complaint filed by Kent Craford, who is sponsoring the ballot measure to create the Portland Public Water District.

If approved, the measure would eliminate City Council oversight of the Portland Water Bureau and the Bureau of Environmental Services, creating a new governing board to make rate-setting and administrative decisions.

In an email to the Elections Division of the Secretary of State's Office, Alpert said he spoke to lawyers about the ballot measure at the request of Hales.

Alpert said he was eating breakfast downtown at 7:30 a.m. with a friend, talking about non-work items, when he received a phone call from Hales.

Hales, slated to meet with Tonkon Torp, had a scheduling problem and asked Alpert if he could attend instead, Alpert explained.

Alpert noted that he received the call from the "mayor" but added that both he and Hales are volunteers with the group opposed to the ballot measure, called Stop the Bull Run Takeover.

Alpert said he met with the group at about 8 a.m., on his personal time, and gave a presentation that ended before his workday began at 9 a.m. Alpert said he did not prepare a formal presentation and did not use work equipment.

During the presentation, Alpert said he "discussed my personal beliefs about the flaws with Ballot Measure 26-156."

"I was not acting in my official capacity as a public employee but as a volunteer on the Stop the Bull Run Takeover Campaign, acting in my personal capacity before normal work hours had begun," he wrote.

Alpert isn't the only aide to Hales whose actions are under fire.

Hales' spokesman, Dana Haynes, is also being investigated for alleged campaign violations. Haynes drafted a press release over the weekend that criticized the water district effort – creating an explosive quote that Hales never said.

ORS 260.432 prohibits public employees from promoting or opposing a ballot measure, initiative or candidate while on the job during work hours, or from being forced to do so.

But the law also "does not restrict the right of a public employee to express personal political views."

Elected officials, on the other hand, are free to politick for a campaign at any time.

Craford filed a complaint against Haynes on Feb. 12, 72 days ago. State officials say they don't know when it will be resolved.

According to state records, officials have launched 13 investigations of alleged ORS 260.432 violations since 2012, with 11 resulting with no violations.

Those 11 investigations averaged 66 days, with the fastest resolution 29 days and the longest 151 days.

In a different instance, one investigation ended after 64 days when the state provided educational information about complying with the law. Only one case ended with a violation; it took 118 days to process.

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **Ed McNamara, Mayor Charlie Hales' Urban Renewal Advisor, is Leaving City Hall**

*By Aaron Mesh*

The advisor leading Mayor Charlie Hales' remodel of urban renewal is leaving City Hall. Ed McNamara, the mayor's policy director overseeing the Portland Development Commission, says he will return in June to his private development company, Turtle Island Development LLC.

"I told [Hales] I wanted to do two years when I agreed to do this," McNamara tells WW. "We didn't quite get there."

McNamara was among Hales' first staff hires upon winning election in 2012. McNamara came to City Hall with a 35-year resume of construction and affordable housing development.

He's been Hales' point man on changing the focus of the PDC from job creation to "place-making": picking a few geographic areas of the city to invest time and money.

The Oregonian reported this morning that Hales will bring his new urban-renewal plan—including the elimination of a Portland State University "education district"—to the City Council next week. McNamara led the mayor's efforts to double down on urban renewal in Old Town/Chinatown and in Lents. The city has spent \$96 million on reviving the East Portland neighborhood of Lents, and now wants to invest as much as another \$55 million over the next five years.

In January, McNamara told WW the city would reform the PDC by creating deadlines to get projects done. "If people are going to invest," McNamara says, "we want to give them some clarity and some certainty about what's going to happen over the next five years."

UPDATE, 1:48 pm: Hales' spokesman Dana Haynes says the mayor informed staff this week about McNamara's departure.

"Ed brings this holistic way of looking at stuff," Haynes says. "He reminds us to go back and look at the whole picture. He's going to be really hard to replace—not just for his knowledge but for his empathy." Haynes says Hales' office will also miss McNamara's contribution of "the world's cheesiest mustache."